



Notes of Meeting: East Midlands and Humber Headteacher Board

29 April 2021

Attendance

Attendance data is published annually on the GOV.UK website.

HTB members who sent their apologies for the meeting have, where possible, been consulted on all projects before the meeting. Their views are reflected in the discussion at the meeting (where appropriate). This excludes items where that member declared a conflict of interest.

Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) chair

- Carol Gray

Headteacher Board (HTB) members

- Andrew Child
- Inderjit Sandhu
- Paul West
- Peter Bell
- Anne Martin
- Paul Stone

Guests

- None

Apologies

- None

DfE senior civil servants

- ESFA Representatives
- Kelly Hughes

Representations Received

- 1- Fulford School, York, Significant Change

This representation was shared in advance of the meeting with all attendees and considered alongside their corresponding item.

General Discussion Points

- Introductions/RSC Update

Diocese of Hallam - Janice Murphy et al

- Presentation to the board on the strategic plan for the creation of two Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts formed of Diocese of Hallam schools.
- The presentation provided an overview of the project strands, the operating model, as well as the benefits and risks of the proposal.

Converter Academy Orders

Points discussed in relation to school conversion.

Project: Horncastle Community Primary School, Lincolnshire, to join Wellspring Academy Trust.

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Requires Improvement January 2019.

The school would benefit from the support and stability provided by joining an academy trust.

The school and trust have an existing working relationship and have been working closely for the past 18 months. The trust is a good match for the school due to their shared ethos and values.

The trust can demonstrate examples of driving performance up in underperforming schools.

The financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the Wellspring Academy Trust and the impact on the trust's future financial health if this school joins were considered.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: Peter Bell and Paul West did not receive the papers and Andy Child was not present for the discussion.

Further actions required: Converter Academy Order to be sent to the school's Chair of Governors. Trust and DCS to be informed of decision.

Free School Presumption – Sponsor Approval

Points discussed in relation to a free school's sponsor status.

Project: East Leake Primary Free School, Nottinghamshire – discussion to consider sponsor options

HTB discussion:

Nottinghamshire County Council are proposing to establish a one form entry primary school (210 pupils), including a provision for a 26 place early years provision, with the capacity to extend to a 1.5 form entry primary school (315 pupils).

This is to meet the demand for school places arising in the area due to new housing developments.

Schools in the area have limited or no spare capacity.

Provision is to cater for pupils aged 3 to 11 years old.

The housing plan has secured section 106 funding along with a 1.2 hectare site to accommodate a 1.5 form entry school.

As a presumption free school, the local authority will provide funding to cover the cost of pre-opening the proposed new school. On opening, the school will be funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, with the local authority providing early years funding for nursery places.

The school is proposing to open in September 2022.

The local authority's preferred sponsor is The Spencer Academies Trust. The trust has a strong track record of successfully opening primary free schools.

The trust has schools in the vicinity who can provide local support.

The board considered the trust to be a good match for school.

The strength of financial management and governance at The Spencer Academies Trust, the trust's financial health and its ability to manage potential financial risks associated with opening a new school were considered.

The supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) was recommended.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: Peter Bell and Paul West did not receive the papers.

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the trust and local authority of decision

Project: Bingham Primary Free School, Nottinghamshire – discussion to consider sponsor options

HTB discussion:

Nottinghamshire County Council are proposing to establish a one form entry primary school (210 pupils), including a provision for a 26 place early years provision, with the capacity to extend to a 1.5 form entry primary school (315 pupils).

This is meet the demand for school places arising in the area due to new housing developments.

Schools in the area have limited or no spare capacity.

Provision is to cater for pupils aged 3 to 11 years old.

The housing plan has secured section 106 funding along with a 1.2 hectare site to accommodate a 1.5 form entry school.

As a presumption free school, the local authority will provide funding to cover the cost of pre-opening the proposed new school. On opening, the school will be funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, with the local authority providing early years funding for the nursery places.

The school is proposing to open in September 2022.

The local authority's preferred sponsor is the Community Inclusive Trust. The trust has a strong track record of successfully opening primary free schools, as well as supporting under performing schools.

The board considered the trust to be a good match for school.

The strength of financial management and governance at the Community Inclusive Trust, the trust's financial health and its ability to manage potential financial risks associated with opening a new school were considered.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: Peter Bell and Paul West did not receive the papers.

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the trust and local authority of decision

Academy Opening Approved in Principle

List of academies approved to open.

Project: Abbey Primary School, Nottinghamshire to join Believe Academy Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/05/2021

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Anton Hillcrest Primary School, Rotherham to join James Montgomery Academy Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/05/2021

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Friskney All Saints Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Lincolnshire to join the Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/05/2021

Further actions required: No action required

Project: Highgate Community Primary School, Leicestershire to join Bradgate Education Partnership Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/05/2021

Further actions required: No action required

Project: John Clifford Primary School, Nottinghamshire to join The White Hills Park Federation Trust

HTB discussion: Proposed school opening date – 01/05/2021

Further actions required: No action required

Significant Change

Points discussed in relation to significant changes application(s).

Project: The St Lawrence Academy, North Lincolnshire, to discuss whether to approve to convert from a Single Academy Trust and become a Multi-Academy Trust.

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Good February 2020 (short inspection).

The proposal is part of the Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education's strategy to create majority church multi-academy trusts across Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire.

The school is seen to serve the local community well, and the intention is that the new multi-academy trust will also attract non-faith community schools.

The performance of the school was discussed.

The board raised concerns that interest from schools wishing to join the new multi-academy trust was not yet formalised.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency will provide the trust with support during the transition, providing advice and guidance at an early stage regarding the proposed structure, modelling, and governance.

The strength of financial management and governance at the trust and impact on the school's future financial health if the proposal goes ahead were considered.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: Peter Bell did not receive the papers.

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the school and trust of the decision.

Project: Thomas Rotherham College, Rotherham, to discuss whether it should be allowed the creation of a 20 place, 16-19 Special Educational Needs unit, increasing to 33 places over a 5 year period.

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Good October 2019.

The unit will cater for students with high functioning medical and mental health support needs, those that are on the autism spectrum and have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Currently there is no similar provision available in Rotherham or the surrounding area.

The proposal is to refurbish two classrooms to create a Flexible Learning Centre. Students will maintain their identity as Thomas Rotherham College students.

The local authority will be contributing £150,000 through their Special Educational Needs funding and the trust will be contributing £100,000 towards capital costs.

The unit will be led by an experienced Head of Faculty and will be supported by a qualified experienced core team.

The board raised concerns regarding the size of the classrooms and how the space allocated will be configured and used. Further information was requested to advise fully on the proposal.

The financial modelling for the proposed new unit, financial health of the college, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact of the significant change on the trust's future financial health were considered.

The supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) was recommended.

RSC decision: Defer

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the college and trust of the decision.

Project: Djanogly Strelley Academy, Nottingham, to discuss whether it should be allowed to add a 16 place Special Educational Needs unit and a physical expansion of premises in order to provide capacity for that unit.

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Good January 2017.

The provision is specifically for pupils with autism and social, emotional and mental health needs alongside the school's mainstream provision.

Admission will be for key stage 1 pupils onwards. Eight places will be allocated to children in the Strelley community and eight for Nottingham City children.

The proposal is required due to a growing need for specialist places in the area.

The building is to be constructed to the front of the existing building. Planning permission is yet to be sought.

Capital funding for the project is via Section 106 funding and the local authority is fully supportive of the proposal.

A full consultation was undertaken and no objections were received.

The financial modelling for the proposed new unit, financial health of the school, strength of financial management and governance at the trust and the impact of the significant change on the trust's future financial health were also considered.

RSC decision: Approve – subject to planning permission being granted

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the school and trust of the decision.

Project: Firbeck Academy, Nottingham, discuss whether to approve the transfer of the hearing-impaired provision to Mellers Primary School, Nottingham

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Requires Improvement July 2019.

Local authority fully supportive of the proposal.

The proposal involves the design and building of an additional facility on the site of Mellers Primary school, in order to provide a specialist base. Planning permission will need to be sought and an application will be submitted in due course.

Approximately 75% of the capital funding is secured through Section 106 and the remaining is secured Disability Access Grant funding and Basic Need funding.

A full consultation was undertaken and no objections were received.

The financial impact of the provision transferring out of Nova Education Trust was considered.

RSC decision: Approve – subject to planning permission being granted

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the school and trust of the decision.

Project: Sirius Academy North, Kingston upon Hull, discuss whether it should be allowed a physical expansion of premises, in order to increase capacity from 1,250 to 1,400 pupils

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Good June 2019 (short inspection).

The proposal is part of the local authority's strategy to meet pressure in the city for secondary school places. A number of expansions at other secondary academies within the city have already been approved or delivered to meet increased demand for places.

The proposed expansion will consist of six classrooms, a combined dining and activity area, one office/meeting room and additional storage capacity.

The school will admit 30 pupils from September 2021 and temporary accommodation will be needed until building work for the permanent accommodation has been completed.

Planning permission for the expansion is expected to be received in October 2021. The local authority will be funding the capital costs of the expansion from its basic need budget.

The local authority has confirmed that growth funding will be available as a result of the expansion.

The strength of financial management and governance at The Constellation Trust and impact on the school and the trust's future financial health if the expansion goes ahead were considered.

The supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) was recommended.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the school and trust of the decision.

Project: Fulford School, York, discuss whether it should be allowed a physical expansion of premises, in order to increase capacity from 1,603 to 1,829.

HTB discussion:

Ofsted Outstanding May 2011

The proposal is due to an increase in demand for secondary provision, both in the area and city wide. The local authority is in support of the proposal and will be providing funding to facilitate the expansion.

Sixty additional places will be created in year 7 from September 2022 and will continue each year until September 2026.

To accommodate the proposal, building work will take place to create the required classrooms. Planning permission is currently being sought and the building work will take place on existing school grounds. There will also be a reconfiguration of the traffic flow system at the site.

Representations received were brought to the attention of the board and were considered.

The strength of financial management and governance at the South York Multi Academy Trust and impact on the school and the trust's future financial health if the expansion goes ahead were considered.

RSC decision: Approve – subject to planning permission being granted.

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the school and trust of the decision.

Trust Change

Points discussed in relation to academies moving to a new trust.

Project: Discuss whether to approve the transfer of Lound Academy Trust (Multi Academy Trust), Sheffield to Steel City Schools Partnership (Multi Academy Trust), Sheffield.

HTB discussion:

Lound Academy Trust is a two-school MAT in an area where pupil numbers are declining. Viability and sustainability of the MAT is therefore an issue.

After exploring different options, Lound's Board passed a resolution to transfer to Steel City Schools Partnership. They considered Steel City Schools Partnership to be an appropriate fit due to being able to provide financial, governance and administrative expertise to Lound and its schools. Lound has educational capacity it can offer to Steel City Schools Partnership.

HTB members were supportive of the proposal and considered Steel City Schools Partnership to be a good match for Lound. Furthermore, it was noted that viability issues will be easier to plan for and deal with if Lound's schools are part of a larger trust with other schools in the area.

The financial health, strength of financial management and governance at Steel City Schools Partnership, and the impact of Lound Academy Trust joining were considered.

The supportive deployment of a School Resource Management Adviser (SRMA) was recommended to Steel City Schools Partnership.

RSC decision: Approve

Conflicts: None

Further actions required: Delivery Lead to inform the school and trust of the decision.